

Message Twelve

**The Return of the Glory of God
to the House of God**

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 9:3; 10:19; 11:23; 43:1-7;
Eph. 3:21; Rev. 21:10-11

**I. God is the God of glory and the God of the house—Acts 7:2;
Gen. 35:7:**

- A. The God of glory appeared to Abraham and called him, attracted him, and enabled him to follow God; in the same principle, God calls the New Testament believers by His invisible glory—Acts 7:2; 2 Pet. 1:3.
- B. The Father of glory is God expressed through His many sons—Eph. 1:17; Heb. 2:10:
 - 1. The title *Father* implies regeneration, and the word *glory* implies expression.
 - 2. The title *Father of glory* implies regeneration and expression; we have been regenerated by God, and we are His expression—John 1:12-13; 1 Thes. 2:12; 2 Thes. 1:10, 12.
- C. In Genesis 35:7 we have a new divine title—*El-bethel*, “God of the house of God”:
 - 1. Before this chapter God was the God of individuals; here He is no longer just the God of individuals but is El-bethel, the God of a corporate body, the God of the house of God.
 - 2. Bethel signifies the corporate life, which is the Body of Christ; thus, in calling God the God of Bethel, Jacob advanced from the individual experience to the corporate experience—1 Cor. 12:12.
- D. Glory is the expression of God, and building is the corporate expression of the Triune God; thus, the glory of God and the building of God go together, for the church, as God’s building, is the corporate expression of God—Exo. 40:34-38; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Rev. 21:10-11; Eph. 3:19, 21; 1 Tim. 3:15-16.

II. In Ezekiel 43:1-7 the glory of God returned to the house:

- A. We need to see a vision of the dwelling place that God desires to have on earth and realize that God’s goal is the building—40:4; 43:10-11; Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:21-22; 4:16; Rev. 21:2.
- B. The desire of God’s heart is to have a dwelling place with man on earth; the goal of God’s salvation is the building of His dwelling place on earth—Exo. 25:8-9; 29:45-46; 40:1-2, 34-38:

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

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1. God wants to have the church built up on earth because He desires to have a dwelling place on earth—Matt. 16:18; 6:10.
 2. He, the God of the heavens, wants to live on the earth; the place where He lives, His dwelling place, is the church—1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 2:5.
- C. “This is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever”—Ezek. 43:7:
1. The throne is for God’s government, administration, and kingdom, and the soles of His feet are for His move on earth.
 2. Apart from the temple as the place of His throne and the place of the soles of His feet, the Lord has no base for His administration and His move on earth.
 3. Only the built-up church gives the Lord the standing to administrate His government and to move on earth; furthermore, the church is the place where the Lord can dwell for His rest and satisfaction—Matt. 16:18-19; Acts 13:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:15.
- D. Because of the idols in the temple, the glory of God withdrew step by step, leaving first the temple, then the city, and finally the people—Ezek. 8:3; 9:3; 10:19; 11:23:
1. The departing of the glory of the Lord signifies the departing of God’s manifestation from the church—Rev. 2:5; cf. 1 Tim. 3:15-16; 1 Cor. 14:25.
 2. The departing of the glory of Jehovah from Israel was a result of God’s judgment—Ezek. 14:21:
 - a. This is the second time in Israel’s history that this happened:
 - 1) At Mount Sinai, when the tabernacle was erected, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle—Exo. 40:34.
 - 2) Later, the Ark was captured by the Philistines, and the glory of the Lord left the tabernacle; this means that God gave up the tabernacle—1 Sam. 4.
 - b. When the temple was built at the time of Solomon, the glory of the Lord returned to fill the temple—1 Kings 8:10-11.
 - c. The glory of the Lord remained in the temple until the time when Ezekiel saw it departing, leaving the temple

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and the city, resting on the Mount of Olives, and finally returning to the heavens; that was the departure of the glory of the Lord—Ezek. 9:3; 10:19; 11:23.

- E. The return of God's glory depends on the building of the house—43:1-12:
1. In his earlier ministry Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord leave the temple, but in his later ministry he saw the glory coming back to the house of the Lord—9:3; 10:19; 11:23; 43:7.
 2. The glory of the Lord returned because the building of God's house was completed—v. 7; Hag. 2:7, 9:
 - a. The glory returned from the east—the direction of the sunrise, which signifies glory; the Lord came back from the glory—Ezek. 43:2; Num. 2:3.
 - b. The glory of the Lord came into the house by the east gate, which was for the glory of the Lord—Ezek. 43:4:
 - 1) In the church life the most important gate is the east gate, the gate that is open to the glory of the Lord.
 - 2) The first consideration we should have in the church life should be the Lord's glory—Eph. 3:21; 1 Cor. 10:31.
 3. The Lord desires to come back to the earth, but for His coming back He needs a dwelling place—a place for His throne and for the soles of His feet—Ezek. 43:7:
 - a. His dwelling place is the church, the base of His administration and move on earth—Eph. 2:21-22; 1 Tim. 3:15.
 - b. God's concern is not merely with salvation or with spirituality but with the building—Eph. 4:12, 16; 1 Cor. 14:4, 26.
 - c. If the church today corresponds to all the details of the holy building of God covered in Ezekiel and thus is built up in every aspect, God will dwell in the church gloriously—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:21; 5:27.
 - d. In order for the glorious God to dwell in the church, the church must be built up to become the dwelling place of God—2:21-22.

III. In the Gospel of John we see the glory of God in the building of God:

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- A. Christ, the incarnated Word, is the tabernacle and the temple filled with glory—1:14; 2:19; Matt. 17:1-2, 5; Luke 9:32; 2 Pet. 1:16-18.
- B. The issue of Christ being glorified by the Father with the divine glory is the Father's house as the enlarged, universal divine-human incorporation—John 12:23; 13:31-32; 17:1, 5; 14:2-3, 23.
- C. According to John 17:22, the oneness of the believers is the oneness in the divine glory for the corporate expression of God; in this aspect of oneness the believers enjoy the glory of the Father as the factor of their perfected oneness and thus express God in a corporate, built-up way.

IV. Ephesians 3 reveals that God is glorified in the church:

- A. Paul prayed that the Father would strengthen the saints according to the riches of His glory, implying that the glory of God can be wrought into the saints—vv. 14-16.
- B. In verse 21 Paul says, "To Him be the glory in the church," implying that the glory of God, which has been wrought into the saints, returns to God:
 - 1. This glory comes to us with God and, after being worked into us, will return to God with us.
 - 2. God's glory is wrought into the church, and He is expressed in the church.
 - 3. To God is the glory in the church; that is, God is glorified in the church—v. 21.

V. An outstanding feature of the New Jerusalem is that it has the glory of God, His expression—Rev. 21:2, 10-11:

- A. We have been predestinated for this glory and called to this glory—1 Cor. 2:7; 1 Pet. 5:10; 1 Thes. 2:12:
 - 1. We are being transformed into this glory and will be brought into it—2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 2:10.
 - 2. We will be glorified with Christ and bear the glory of God for God's corporate expression in the New Jerusalem—Rom. 8:17, 30.
- B. The entire New Jerusalem will bear the glory of God, which is God Himself shining out through the city—Rev. 21:10-11, 23:

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1. Actually, the glory of God will be the content of the New Jerusalem, for this city is filled with His glory; this indicates that the city is a vessel to contain God and express Him in a corporate way.
2. The glory of God is God Himself being manifested; the fact that the New Jerusalem is full of God's glory means that God is manifested in this city.
3. The church life today should also have God's glory, manifesting and expressing Him corporately in this marvelous divine attribute—Eph. 3:21.